

Oyster River Cooperative School District

Regular Meeting

November 1, 2017

OR Middle School Library

7:00 p.m.

SCHOOL BOARD: Denise Day, Brian Cisneros, Tom Newkirk, Kenny Rotner, Dan Klein, and Al Howland Not Present: Michael Williams
Student Representative: H.J. Wilson

ADMINISTRATORS: Sue Caswell, Todd Allen, Superintendent Morse, David Goldsmith, Jim Roczyki, and Carrie Vaich

There were 17 members of the public present.

I. CALL TO ORDER:

APPROVAL OF MANIFESTS:

Payroll Manifests #8 \$1,276.040.09

Vendor Manifest #8 \$218,625.76

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Revisions: Kenny Rotner moved to put the cooperative football to the discussion section, and move the phone policy to the discussion items, 2nd by Denise Day. Motion passed 6-0 with the Student Representative voting in the affirmative.

III. PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Keith O'Brien of Lee is here tonight with a coalition of parents who are concerned about the cell phone policy. He observed lunch at the middle school recently. There is a growing amount of evidence with too much screen time. He has sent the Board the studies and hopes the Board takes action on this matter.

David Sietz of Durham reported that research has shown addiction to social media and their phone. It is creating anxiety. He is asking the Board to be the voice and to have no devices during school hours at the middle school. He also encouraged the Board to teach an etiquette class on how to use technology.

John Jones is here to speak in favor of a cooperative football agreement between Portsmouth and Oyster River. They are new to the District and are in favor of such an agreement and is asking the Board to give it full consideration.

Krista Butts of Lee reported that there are 19 eighth graders on the football team this year. 18 out of 19 students are multi-sport students in the District. These are great kids and she supports the cooperative agreement.

Tom Haines is a parent in the District who spoke regarding the cell phone policy in the District. We are only beginning to know the impact this technology is having on our society. He supports the initiative to stop the cell phone use at the schools in the District. It is distracting.

Seth Fiermonti of Durham supports the elimination of cell phones at the middle school during school hours. He requests that the school board adds this to a future agenda.

Liz Phillips of Durham spoke regarding the cell phone policy. When used during the school day this provides distractions and anxiety.

Heidi Bogle lives in Durham and is asking the School Board to review and prohibit the use of cell phone on school grounds during the day.

Iago Hale has two children in the District and strongly urged the Board to reconsider the use of the cell phones and consider a new policy.

Tom Weber has two children in the District and spoke about the cell phone policy in the District. He wants to make sure that they use the technology in a responsible way. He would like cell phones not to be seen at all in the Middle School.

Derek Sowers of Durham echoed the comments as mentioned by other members of the public earlier this evening. He thinks that cell phones are distracting, the effects of the over use of these devices in the Middle School, and cell phones creates the culture of the have and have nots.

Aaron Hubbell of Durham talked about the cell phone policy including social exclusion. He asked the Board to make a sensible cell phone policy.

Michelle Nathan is a parent of two children in the District and is in support of a cooperative football team with Portsmouth. Although football has its risks it is not significantly higher than other sports. Football is one of the few things that has pulled her son away from devices and get involved.

Robert Barth of Lee spoke against cooperative football. A copy of his letter will be included in public correspondences.

Serena Beauchesne has a child in the District and is in support of the cooperative agreement with Portsmouth and is encouraging the Board to move forward on this.

Brenda Worden of Lee thanked the Board for the diversity forum. She was appreciative of the live stream. There have been numerous incidences that have been brought to the attention for years without anything being done. We cannot change what we don't acknowledge. There are significant areas where there are opportunities for growth. She encouraged the Board to reevaluate the Transportation Director's salary to ensure that it is in line with all her responsibilities. She also believes that the Unified Coaching positions should be paid and not volunteer.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Motion to approve 10/18/17 regular meeting minutes:

Al Howland moved to approve the minutes of October 18th, 2nd by Denise Day. Motion passed 6-0 with the Student Representative voting in the affirmative.

V. ANNOUNCEMENTS, COMMENDATIONS, and COMMENTS:

A. District: Carrie Vaich of Mast Way and David Goldsmith of Moharimet reported that the PTOs have been working a lot together which has been great. They thanked all the parents and guardians for all their help with school this morning. Kate Mesner, a visiting author, is coming to both schools in the upcoming weeks.

B. Board: Denise Day was impressed with One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest at the High School. It was very well done. She thanked the community members and parents who have been writing letters to share their thoughts about a variety of issues. It's great to hear their thoughts.

Kenny Rotner echoed Denise's sentiment about community members coming forward. He also thanked Doris Demers for putting together the community Dinner before the Diversity Forum. He also thanked Jim Rozycki for moving on an initiative for additional solar panels.

Dan Klein feels that the community input is invaluable. One of the ideas that has been put forth recently is Blizzard Bags. He is requesting this be placed on the agenda for the next meeting. He is suggesting a summary of the outcome of the decision after the Board's decision on Blizzard Bags.

Brian Cisneros agrees that Blizzard Bags on the agenda is a great idea.

Al Howland attended one of Scott McGraths Sociology classes at the high school. It is disturbing to hear that students are in a race to market themselves. They are trying to project an image because they think that's what colleges want. Tom Newkirk feels that we need to look at how our kids are overscheduled. Kenny Rotner feels that along these lines there needs to be a discussion on homework and would like to see it on the agenda.

VI. DISTRICT REPORTS:

A. Assistant Superintendent/Curriculum & Instruction Reports:

Todd Allen discussed the revised copy of the Grades 6-12 Math Program.

The Oyster River Mathematics Department has developed a mission and a vision statement that reflect the core beliefs of our math educators. These mission and vision statements have been a driving force in the recent review of the 6-12 Oyster River Math Program. District math competencies now align with Common Core Standards and the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics best practices. By utilizing a multiple pathways approach, our goal is to provide a range of personalized learning opportunities that meet the needs of all students. The math teaching staff at ORCSD are committed to making this mission and vision a reality.

Mission Statement: The mission of the Oyster River Mathematics Department is to engage, support, and challenge all learners in the study of mathematics. Our goal is to provide an education experience in mathematic that ensures students the opportunity to become college and career ready.

Vision Statement: In support of our mission, we are committed to excellent teaching, a well-designed curriculum, and a supported environment for all students. Students are challenged within the classroom environment to develop skills in analysis, reasoning, creative problem solving, collaborative learning, and communication as they gain knowledge of mathematics. This is achieved through maintaining an updated curriculum with current standards, making real world connections, incorporating technology and a commitment to continuous professional development. We maintain high academic expectations and support all students to realize their full potential through a progression of appropriately challenging coursework.

Middle School Program: At Oyster River Middle School, we strive to move students from concrete mathematical thinking to more abstract, algebraic reasoning. In 6th and 7th grade, the curriculum is based on Common Core Standards in classroom environments that thrive on differentiation strategies. In 8th grade pre-algebra course builds upon the work done earlier in middle school.

High School Program: To graduate from high school, the state of New Hampshire requires three years of mathematics along with a fourth year mathematics experience. This fourth year experience must be a math intensive course.

Todd reviewed with the Board the math flow of possibilities the students follow during their mathematics experience at the high school.

Todd also reported that next week the Homework Survey will be distributed.

Todd talked about the minimum standards regarding the school calendar. We are on an hours calendar in the District. The minimum standard is 990 instructional hours and we go beyond that.

B. Superintendent's Report:

Superintendent Morse detailed the past two days with the power lines down and power outages which prevented school from being in session. The School District worked with the Town of Lee over the past two days to clear these utility issues. He thanked everyone that helped to make that happen.

He is asking to take the November 9th teacher workshop and adjust it to a regular school day.

Denise Day moved that November 9th be a regular school day, 2nd by Dan Klein. They recognize that parents may have plans to be away. The Board discussed that this may be too short notice and perhaps to adjust a workshop day later in the year. **Denise and Dan withdrew their motion with the possibility having one later in the year.**

Diversity Forum: Superintendent Morse hasn't seen the community this engaged before. This was the most amazing group of panel members. There were 400 plus people that attended. Kenny Rother thanked Superintendent Morse for being so instrumental for putting together this evening and for sharing his story. We are very fortunate to have him as a Superintendent and thanked him for the success of the evening.

Superintendent Morse is going to Berwick Academy tomorrow to meet with their Diversity Coordinator to look at the work they are doing and try to determine a systemic way to make sure each child is valued. They are also planning a parent forum with Andrew Smith. This is the beginning of an in depth dialogue of this issue with the District.

Report out on Meetings with the Town of Lee and Madbury: I met with the Town of Lee and Madbury. Both towns have a positive feeling with the District and would like them to watch the bottom line.

Policy Committee Addressed Nondiscrimination Policy AC: To look at the policy in a more narrative and thoughtful way.

Cooperative Football: We have officially been reached out to by Portsmouth and Dover to consider a cooperative football team.

C. Business Administrator:

Budget Update: Sue Caswell reported that everything is where it should be. We are right in line of where we were last year.

Restructure of Sustainability Committee: Sue Caswell detailed that the Sustainability Committee has been active in the schools for five years beginning in 2011. Historically, the Committee had 3 Green Team Leaders working within each school. In the spring of last year, discussions began

about shifting the model from the school based “Green Team Leaders” to one of district-wide “Sustainability Coordinators”.

The committee was renamed an “advisory” committee as it better reflects their role of supporting the work of the Sustainability Coordinators.

On September 27th, the renamed Sustainability Advisory Committee met and approved the proposed changes to the committee’s structure as well as the 2017-18 goals and objectives document. This document is organized around the District’s Environmental Sustainability Policy and Procedures.

Jaqueline Brune, a green team leader, is a lifetime master gardener. Maggie Morrison has been a sustainability coordinator since its inception.

Kenny Rotner moved to accept the reorganization with their new organizational chart and accept their goals for the 2017-18 year, 2nd by Brian Cisneros. Motion passed 6-0 with the Student Representative voting in the affirmative.

D. Student Senate Report:

Student Representative Hanna Jane Wilson reported that the Red Cross came today for a blood drive. There is a Gap Year Fair in the High School Library. There was a good turn out from other towns as well. It would be beneficial to talk to students before homework discussion at the Board meeting. Their next meeting will be on November 14th. One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest was an amazing performance. Congratulations to the Boys Cross Country for winning the State Championship.

E. Other: None

VII. DISCUSSION ITEMS

Middle School Cell Phone Policy: They would propose to task the policy committee with this issue.

Tom Newkirk moved that the Board charges the Policy Committee to create a plan for the review of the Cell Phone Policy with the goal of the Board making a decision to affirm or modify the current policy by May 2018. This plan should include survey of policies in comparable districts,

and the opportunity for all interested parties to express their views on the current policy, 2nd by Kenny Rotner.

This would allow a decision to be made by May. The Policy Committee can keep the Board informed in this process as they go along. Dan would like the committee to review the policies on cell phones at all the schools and buses. The Student Representative noted that the high school restructured the policy last year. Al Howland feels this will need to be a cooperative effort with parents as well. Perhaps there could be an agreement with parents on etiquette and basic policy in the short term. Brian would like to get input on teachers thoughts as well.

The Motion passed 6-0 with the Student Representative voting in the affirmative.

Cooperative Football with an established program at an area school: Both Dover and Portsmouth have expressed an interest in forming a cooperative football team. They discussed the possibility of charging the Athletic Director to approach area schools about an opportunity to explore a cooperative football team. Kenny noted that there were two groups of parents here this evening. One group advocating for football and one stating the dangers of cell phone use. There is evidence of damages of football when kids are in the elementary and middle school ages. As a School Board we want to launch kids into health and wellness. There are schools abandoning football. This is sub clinical through those years. He doesn't feel that there is any way to play football safely. Denise Day suggested postponing this item until a full Board is present. The Board agreed by consensus.

Siemens Report: Jim Roczki, Facilities Director, reviewed the possible list of Building Infrastructure Projects with the Board:

The duration of the lease would be 10 to 15 years depending on what the Board approves.

Sue Caswell recommends holding a public hearing before moving forward with anything to inform the public on the process.

These possible building infrastructure projects will come back before the Board at the next School Board meeting.

Superintendent Evaluation: Superintendent Morse will begin his self-evaluation and they will have a nonpublic at the next meeting.

IX. SCHOOL BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS: None

X. PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Dean Rubine of Lee attended the diversity forum. It was truly amazing, and the high point was Dr. Morse's personal story and he thanked him for sharing.

XI. CLOSING ACTIONS:

A. Future Meeting Dates:

11/6/17 Town of Durham Council Meeting 7:00 p.m.

11/8/17 Board Budget Workshop – Lee Safety Complex 8:00 – 1:00

11/16/17 Regular Meeting ORHS Library

11/29/17 Board Manifest Meeting SAU Offices 5:30 p.m.

XII. NON-PUBLIC SESSION: RSA 91-A:3 II (If needed)

NON-MEETING SESSION RSA 91-A2 I (If needed)

XIII. ADJOURNMENT:

Al Howland moved to adjourn the School Board Meeting at 9:33 p.m., 2nd by Dan Klein. Motion passed 6-0.

Respectfully yours,
Laura Grasso Dobson
Recording Secretary